

But while the State of Utah is doing very well, the rest of our Nation is not. As a small business owner, I know that government does not create jobs; the private sector creates jobs. And businessmen all over this Nation are asking—no, they're even begging—for one thing: Get government out of the way. Allow our economy to grow. Create new American jobs. Expand opportunity; don't expand government.

There are, right now, 4.4 million Americans that have been jobless for more than 6 months, and this is completely unacceptable.

We must simplify our Tax Code. We need to become energy independent. We need to move forward with projects such as the Keystone pipeline. We need to reform health care and entitlement programs, which account for the vast majority of our deficit and debt spending.

Americans deserve better. We can do better.

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PASS THE JOBS ACT NOW

(Ms. WILSON of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it's now been 885 days since I arrived in Congress, and the Republican leadership has still not allowed a single vote on serious legislation to address our unemployment crisis. This Congress is pretending our unemployment crisis is completely over. This Congress is acting as though surface scandals and a now rapidly shrinking budget deficit are the only issues that matter to this country. Try telling that to any of the 12 million unemployed Americans, who are today struggling to keep their homes and to pay for their food and health care. Try telling that to any of the 3 million Americans who have been unemployed for more than a year and are facing the indescribably painful possibility that they will never work again.

Mr. Speaker, unemployment is the Nation's true deficit. Let's pass the Jobs Now Act and the President's American Jobs Act to end it. The mantra of this Congress should be: jobs, jobs, jobs.

CONSCIENCE PROTECTIONS

(Mr. MESSER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MESSER. The First Amendment is under attack in Madison, Indiana. One of my constituents, Bill Grote, is a profile in courage as he litigates against the government's attempt to force him to violate his First Amendment rights and comply with ObamaCare's contraceptive mandate. Churches deserve protection from this mandate, but private businesses and business owners deserve protection, too.

Mr. Grote is not alone. Some businesses may choose to close their doors instead of complying. Others may be fined out of business. Ask yourself: If the Federal Government can make Mr. Grote purchase products in violation of his religious beliefs, what can it do to you?

I applaud Mr. Grote's courage and urge the House to pass the Health Care Conscience Rights Act to stop this attack on religious liberty.

WE NEED A COMPREHENSIVE EMPLOYEE NONDISCRIMINATION ACT

(Mr. POCAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POCAN. This June, as we celebrate LGBT Pride Month, LGBT Americans have much to celebrate. Every day this country moves closer and closer towards embracing full equality for all of its citizens. And yet the path to equality and justice saw a setback last week when one of our Nation's largest companies chose to deny fundamental workplace protections for its employees.

For the 14th year in a row, ExxonMobil's shareholders voted to strike down a proposal that would specifically prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. This is a company that has received more than \$1 billion in government contracts over the last decade. Simply put, the government should not be in business with companies that discriminate.

Exxon's decision makes it part of a shrinking minority: 88 percent of Fortune 500 companies specifically ban employee discrimination based on sexual orientation. BP doesn't discriminate, Chevron doesn't discriminate, Shell Oil doesn't discriminate. But ExxonMobil does. Their anti-equality policies should start to hurt their bottom line.

Unfortunately, it is still legal to fire someone in 29 States based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. ExxonMobil's backwards decision highlights why we need to pass a comprehensive employee nondiscrimination act.

PASS THE FAIR TAX

(Mr. LONG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, all Americans are aware how our current Tax Code is too complex and punishes people who save, invest, and achieve economic success. However, the recent news coming from the IRS illustrates another pressing reason for tax reform. Our current Tax Code puts too much power and potential for abuse into the hands of unaccountable, unelected bureaucrats.

The American people deserve a tax system that cannot be a political weapon to be used against them. That is why I'm a proud cosponsor of the Fair Tax. The Fair Tax would eliminate the IRS by replacing the current Tax Code with a simple consumption-based tax. The Fair Tax would be collected equally from all Americans, with no opportunity for the government to attack or discriminate against innocent citizens.

The Fair Tax is a reform measure that offers a rare chance to unleash economic growth, create good jobs, and at the same time protect the rights of American people. I urge this body to swiftly pass the Fair Tax.

PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT

(Ms. BONAMICI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago, the Equal Pay Act passed in Congress with strong bipartisan support. That should be no surprise. It makes sense.

Back in 1963, 201 Democrats joined with 160 Republicans to support equal pay for equal work. Only 9 Members voted "no." Back then, women earned just 59 cents for every dollar men earned. And today, we're still 23 cents short on the promise of equal pay. Half a century later, women earn 77 cents for every dollar men make for the same work. The Paycheck Fairness Act would strengthen the Equal Pay Act, giving women the paychecks they deserve and have earned. It would eliminate the loopholes and carve-outs that have denied women basic fairness for decades.

As we celebrate the passage of the Equal Pay Act, let's hope for a return to bipartisanship and common sense. Let's make sure that women are paid what they deserve and pass the Paycheck Fairness Act. Equal pay was bipartisan 50 years ago. It should be bipartisan today.

JOBS AND THE ECONOMY

(Mr. HALL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HALL. Mr. Speaker, our top priority in Congress should be to promote job creation and a healthy economy. Too many Americans are struggling. The unemployment rate remains too high, the labor force participation rate continues to drop, and the national debt still is nearly \$17 trillion. This is due to the administration's failed economic and overreaching regulatory policies. Wasteful government spending and higher taxes are not the answers the American people are looking for. America needs real solutions for economic recovery.

In order for all Americans to thrive, we need jobs. Over 60 percent of new jobs are generated by small businesses,